

our words brought life in every situation?

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.”

Prov 18:21

How often do you analyse conversations you've had and think “I wish I hadn't said that” or “If only I'd said this instead”? It can be easy, in the heat of the moment, to just say whatever comes to mind without thinking about the consequences. The Bible teaches us to be careful with our speech as it has the “power of life and death”. Our words should bring the life of God into the world around us.

“Sticks & Stones May Break my Bones but Words will Never Hurt me”

This phrase may project a strong response to hurtful speech, but the reality is that words do hurt. An uncontrolled and careless tongue can do damage:

Physically - Physical harm can be the consequence of a verbal disagreement or can be the result of words that encourage careless actions (Prov 15:1).

Emotionally - Malicious or hurtful language can cause offense or reignite past trauma (Prov 12:18).

Spiritually - Ungodly speech can lead people away from God and towards evil (Matt 12:35).

The Bible encourages us to be wise about how quick we are to speak (James 1:19), how much we say (Prov 10:19), what we say (Prov 15:2 & 23) and when we say it (Prov 25:11).

Ultimately, everything that we say should be said for the benefit, building up, growth and (spiritual) maturity of others, and should be said with the self-sacrificial love that brings unity (Eph 4:15).

It's important to remember that this doesn't mean just saying things that will make people feel good in the moment. Sometimes, God's truth can be hard to hear but, when spoken in the right way, it will still bring His life and achieve what He has purposed it to (Isaiah 55:10-11).

How do we Ensure that our Words Bring Life?

“Garbage in, Garbage out”

Matt 12:34 teaches us that what is in our hearts will overflow out of our mouths. If we truly want to make sure that what comes out of our mouths is life-giving, we need to watch over what we fill our hearts with (Prov 4:23).

In Paul and Timothy's letter to the Philippians, they encourage the recipients to focus on whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent or praiseworthy (Phi 4:8). In other words, to focus on the things of God!

This Month's Challenge... Put some time aside to consider if there are any areas where your words may not have been life-bringing. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you if there are any changes that you need to make to ensure that what you say reveals God to others.

At the end of the month, reflect on any changes you have noticed in how you speak and the impact that's had.